



OIL AND GAS WELL DRILLING **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of requirements, but is intended to answer some of the more common questions received concerning oil / gas drilling. Please see Chapter 12, Article VII, City of Grapevine Code of Ordinances for all ordinance requirements.

Q *Are permits required for oil or gas drilling within the City of Grapevine?*

A Yes, a Special Use Permit is required for gas or oil well drilling or production, **and can only be approved in non-residential districts.** An application and detailed site plan are required for council review. Application requirements may be found on line at www.grapevinetexas.gov or in Section 49 of the Zoning Ordinance. Fees for Special Use Permits may be found on application.

Furthermore, a permit is required from the Fire Department prior to development of a drilling or production site. The permit application is reviewed by officials from the Fire Department, Development Services, and Public Works Department. Submittal requirements may be found in Chapter 12, Article VII of the Grapevine Code of Ordinances.

Q *I cannot find anything in the ordinance that says drilling permits can only be issued in nonresidential districts.*

A This requirement is contained in Section 49.B.12 Special Use Permits of the Zoning Ordinance. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance require a public hearing with Planning and Zoning and Council consideration.

Q *I am concerned that groundwater might be contaminated when saltwater waste is injected back into the ground.*

A The ordinance specifically prohibits salt water disposal wells.

Q *What are the setback requirements for wells?*

A No well shall be drilled, the centerline of which is:

- Within 200 feet from a floodplain.
- Within 1,000 feet from a fresh water well.
- Within 1,000 feet from any public park.
- Within 1,000 feet from any residence, religious institution, public building, hospital or school for which a permit has been issued on the date of the application for a drilling permit is filed with the fire marshal.
- Within 300 feet from other buildings.
- Within 500 feet from any lease line as indicated on State Railroad Commission Form W-1 or recorded property, lot, or tract.
- Within 500 feet from any existing storage tank or source of potential ignition.
- Within 200 feet of any public street, road, highway, or right-of-way line.
- Within 100 feet of any building accessory to the operation of the well.

For any area where the well bore is within 775 feet of any type of surface water conveyance including but not limited to creeks, streams, drainage ditches, a flood study shall be submitted to the city engineer.

Q *What are the setback requirements for well facilities and equipment?*

A 300 feet from any public park, residence, religious institution, public building, hospital, school or any other building used, designed and intended to be used, for human occupancy, for which a building permit has been issued on the date the drilling permit is filed.

Q *Can city council approve exceptions to this ordinance?*

A Yes, the setback distances for wells contained in Section 12.145(d), including but not limited to setback distances from public parks, residences, religious institutions, hospitals, schools, public streets, may be reduced at the discretion of the city council. **An ordinance change would be required to deviate from any other provisions of this ordinance.**

Q What are permissible work hours for well operations?

A Except for drilling, work hours for well site development are limited to **7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday.**

Q Are there noise levels that apply to well sites?

A Yes, the maximum noise level is 65 db(a) at 300 feet.

Q Are there restrictions for vehicles associated with well sites?

A Yes, vehicles over three (3) tons in weight are restricted to streets designated as arterials, collectors, or local commercial as designated by the thoroughfare plan.

Q I'm concerned about the appearance of the well site, are there requirements regarding cleanliness and aesthetics?

A Yes, among other requirements, drill sites shall be kept clean of brush, rubbish, etc for a distance of 100 feet around drill site. Any damage to public property shall be repaired within 30 days. The holding pit and contents shall be removed within 90 days of completion of the well. Fencing shall be provided around the drilling features, including storage pits, unless 24 hour security is provided. All well heads, storage tanks, separation facilities or other mechanical equipment shall be screened with a six (6) foot high solid screen fence.

Q Is the well / drilling operator required to have insurance?

A Yes, Insurance required by the operator for each well until abandoned and the site restored.

Following are some of the requirements:

Operator shall expressly release, discharge and hold harmless all claims against the City of Grapevine and its agents, elected officials, employees, etc.

Policy cancellation requires 30 days written notice to owner and city.

Coverage shall be a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage.

Environmental impairment coverage required.

\$500,000 automobile combined single limited coverage required for each vehicle (owner, non-owner, and hired).

Workers compensation shall include liability limits of \$100,000 for each accident, \$100,000 for each employee, and a \$500,000 policy limit for occupational disease.

Minimum limit of \$10,000,000 excess liability insurance required.

Control of well insurance with a minimum limit of \$5,000,000 required.

Security instrument that covers each well shall be delivered to the Fire Marshal before the permit is issued. Shall cover damages to public streets, including bridges, and shall be in the form of a letter of credit, payment bond, or certificate of deposit.

Q Do these requirements apply to wells drilled outside of the *City of Grapevine*?

A No, the City of Grapevine cannot enforce these requirements outside its jurisdiction.

Q I have been contacted by an oil / gas production company about the lease / purchase of mineral rights on my property. Does the city have any advice?

A Because this is a private arrangement between the property owner and production company, the city is not involved with the transaction. You might wish to consult with a Real Estate Attorney regarding any legal issues.

Prepared by:

City of Grapevine Development Services Department, April 28, 2008.

For additional information, please contact the City of Grapevine Development Services Department, (817) 410-3158.